

KIDNEY PEER MENTOR PROGRAM

HOW TO PARTICIPATE

To inquire about the Kidney Transplant Peer Mentor Program, please contact

Stacy Brand, MBA, Outreach Manager,
slipson@umich.edu

Sandy Feldkamp, RN, BSN, Triage Coordinator,
sraab@umich.edu

800-333-9013



Kidney and Pancreas Transplant Program
300 North Ingalls St., Room 5D17
Ann Arbor, MI 48109-5415

800-333-9013

www.michigantransplant.org

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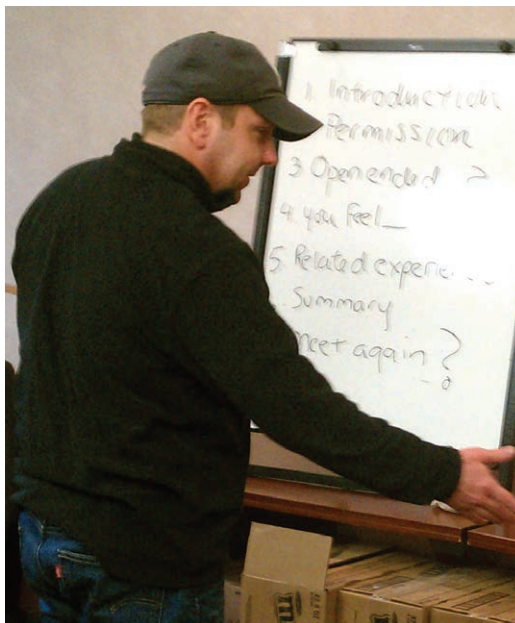
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The University of Michigan Transplant Center has partnered with the National Kidney Foundation of Michigan to create a peer mentor program for kidney transplant patients and their families.

The University of Michigan Transplant Kidney Peer Mentor Program is based on the concept of looking to your peers to learn from their experiences. The mentors of the program are patients who have already successfully gone through transplant. Many find it helpful and reassuring to talk with those that have first-hand knowledge about the transplant experience.

The word mentor refers to one who is an advisor or teacher. The peer mentors play many different roles. They listen to fellow patients, strive to instill confidence, provide encouragement and help patients confront challenging issues and emotions. Mentors are expected to maintain confidentiality of patient information.

Peer Mentor Program Goals

- Provide information, guidance and emotional support to those involved in the transplant process
- Offer a network of peers to help those experiencing the process to not feel alone
- Encourage patients to stay active before and after transplant

What is the Role of the Peer Mentor?

After peer mentors go through training, they work closely with the University of Michigan Transplant Center Outreach Program. In their role, peer mentors enhance patient care by:

- Providing peer support. Mentors provide patients with support through telephone calls, visits, mail or e-mail.
- Participating in Transplant Expos at dialysis centers across Michigan and speaking with patients considering transplant or those currently on the waitlist.
- Answering questions and sharing their story at the Kidney Transplant Patient Education Class.
- Providing helpful transplant information. Mentors share their own experiences from a peer perspective. This one-on-one communication with another transplant patient offers both an individualized and highly personal account of the transplant process.

- Helping patients work with the transplant team. The importance of working well with the transplant team is important. Because of their personal experience, mentors can help patients learn the best ways to interact productively with the transplant team.
- Providing support and encouragement to comply with taking prescribed medications. Strict compliance with medications is critical to a positive outcome for transplantation. Mentors offer support and encouragement in this process.
- Teaching the community about organ donation and sharing their personal experience.

The Mentor Program is entirely voluntary and is offered to all transplant candidates and their families during the formal evaluation phase. Patients may join or leave the mentoring program at any time during the transplant process without affecting the care provided by the University of Michigan Transplant Center, its staff or physicians.

